

MOTION BY SUPERVISORS HILDA L. SOLIS
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Decriminalizing Mobility Through Implementation of the Vision Zero Action Plan

A recent analysis conducted by the Los Angeles Times¹ revealed that out of more than 44,000 bike stops made by the Los Angeles Sheriff’s Department since 2017, 70 percent involved Latinx bicyclists. According to that analysis, the stops have been used by the Sheriff’s Department as a tool to “fight crime;” however, searches conducted during these stops resulted in finding illegal items just 8 percent of the time and seizing weapons less than 0.5 percent of the time. These bike stops also occurred at greater rates in communities of color such as unincorporated East Los Angeles than in more affluent neighborhoods throughout the County. Despite discussions of reform and training, it is clear that the Department, whose workforce includes more than 50 percent Latinx deputies, has not addressed systemic issues of biased policing.

¹ <https://www.latimes.com/california/newsletter/2021-11-08/bike-stops-la-sheriff-deputies-latino-essential-california>

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Mobility and access to high quality transportation are already critical issues of equity for Los Angeles County (County) residents as it is. Transportation costs in our region are amongst the highest in the country, making up 20 percent of a typical household's income. Most Americans utilize a car for commuting purposes; but due to the high costs associated with car ownership, lower-income households are often relegated to biking, walking, taking transit, and using other non-vehicular forms of transportation for their daily tasks. Many bicyclists look to the sidewalk as refuge from the harassment they receive from drivers when they use the roadway and from the danger of sharing road space with fast-moving traffic. Surveys conducted by the nonprofit Los Angeles County Bicycle Coalition found riders are twice as likely to ride on the sidewalk on streets with no bike lanes than those with them, and these concerns are justified. In fact, between 2013 and 2017, 1,265 bicyclists incurred injuries from collisions on unincorporated roadways, and 131 experienced severe injuries or lost their lives. Residents should not be punished by the Sheriff's Department due to their poverty, the color of their skin, their neighborhood, their commitment to more sustainable modes of transportation, or their concern for personal safety. The Sheriff's Department's use of bike stops to search Latinx and other bicyclists only exacerbates structural inequities in low-income communities of color.

In 2020, the Board of Supervisors adopted a Vision Zero Action Plan that seeks to reduce traffic fatalities on unincorporated roadways to zero by 2025. To reach that goal, the Plan proposes a number of engineering, education, and enforcement strategies that make travel safer on County roads without disproportionately burdening certain populations. Of those strategies, there are several related to law enforcement, including a recommendation to legalize the operation of bicycles on sidewalks which is currently

prohibited under Los Angeles County Code and accounted for 8 percent of stops by the Sheriff's Department. These recommendations are low hanging fruit that can be immediately implemented to begin addressing the injustices exposed by the Los Angeles Times analysis. Every resident should have a right to safe travel regardless of what mode of transportation they decide to use.

WE, THEREFORE, MOVE that the Board of Supervisors direct the Director of Public Health to collaborate with Public Works, Sheriff's Department, County Counsel, California Highway Patrol, Los Angeles County Development Authority, and the Los Angeles County Superior Court to do the following:

1. Immediately begin implementation of the following recommendations included in the County's Vision Zero Action Plan in partnership with community stakeholders:
 - B-2:** Identify process and partners for establishing a diversion program for persons cited for infractions related to walking and bicycling.
 - B-3:** Identify process and partners to consider revising the Los Angeles County Municipal Code to allow the operation of bicycles on sidewalks.
2. Identify any other recommendations included in the Vision Zero Action Plan that should be implemented in partnership with community stakeholders to further decriminalize and enable the use of non-vehicular and alternative modes of transportation in unincorporated communities;
3. Instruct the Director of Public Health, in consultation with the Chief Executive

Office and relevant County departments, to develop cost estimates and identify funding needs and potential opportunities to support the implementation of these Vision Zero recommendations; and

4. Report back in writing in 90 days with an update on the above directives.

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